

MarbleTM DROP

The Mesmerizing Mindbending Marble Game

*"O Speculators on perpetual motion, how many vain designs
you have created in the like quest! Go and join up with the
seekers after gold!"*

—Leonardo da Vinci

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INSTALLING MARBLE DROP – WINDOWS

3.1X

1. Launch Windows 3.1x
2. Insert your MARBLE DROP CD into your CD-ROM drive
3. Open **Program Manager**
4. Open the **File** menu
5. Select **Run**
6. In your Run field, type **d:\setup** (where d:\ corresponds to the letter assigned to your CD-ROM drive) and press **Enter**.
7. You have three installation choices. Your choice depends upon how much space you can spare on your hard drive.
 - **FULL INSTALL** (requires 95MB)
 - **CUSTOM INSTALL** (requires 30 to 95MB)
 - **MINIMAL INSTALL** (requires 10MB)
8. Having made your choice, follow the instructions on your screen. The process should take a few minutes.

To begin to play, locate the **Maxis** program group in Program Manager, and double-click on the **MARBLE DROP** Icon.

INSTALLING MARBLE DROP – WINDOWS 95

1. Start Windows 95.
2. Insert your MARBLE DROP CD in your CD-ROM drive.
 - If your CD ROM drive supports AutoPlay, the Setup screen appears.
 - If your CD ROM drive does not support AutoPlay, then click on the Start button, select Run, type d:\automenu.exe (where d:\ corresponds to the letter assigned to your CD-ROM drive) and click OK to make the Setup screen appear. Click PROCEED and then INSTALL to start the installation process.
3. You have three installation choices. Your choice depends upon how much space you can spare on your hard drive.
 - **FULL INSTALL** (requires 95MB)
 - **CUSTOM INSTALL** (requires 30 to 95MB)
 - **MINIMAL INSTALL** (requires 10MB)
4. Having made your choice, follow the instructions on your screen. The process should take a few minutes. When the installation is done, click OK to return to your normal desktop environment.

To begin to play, click the **Start** button, then choose **Programs/Maxis/MARBLE DROP**. If you chose **MINIMAL** or **CUSTOM** install, be certain to have the **MARBLE DROP** CD in your CD-ROM drive.

After **MARBLE DROP** has been run once from AutoPlay or installed from the CD, you can start **MARBLE DROP** from either the AutoPlay screen or the Start menu.

PLAYING MARBLE DROP

SELECTING A PUZZLE

You must first select the puzzle machine you will solve. At the beginning, you will fall naturally to the first puzzle, but you need not spend your time with this puzzle if you prefer not to do so, for it has forty-nine siblings. The choosing of puzzles is simple:

1. Open the Game menu, and choose Select Puzzle.
2. Choose the puzzle you want from the list.

The puzzles are listed in order from easiest to most difficult. In addition, each puzzle has a status icon. A red status icon denotes an untouched puzzle. A green status icon indicates a puzzle that has been started, yet not finished. A blue icon represents those puzzles that are solved and whose reason to live has been completed.

SELECTING YOUR FIRST MARBLE

Once you have chosen a puzzle, begin playing by selecting a marble with your mouse. Be sure to hold down the left mouse button as you drag the marble to the funnel. **Warning: It is crucial to select a marble whose color matches the left-most slot of the bin you are trying to fill.**



Left-most Slots of Bins

Drop the marble into one of the start funnels at the top, and you will see, as the marble falls, whether you have correctly predicted the bin into which the marble will fall.

CONTINUING YOUR PLAY

Puzzle-solving can be a trial-and-error process, but be not nervous. Relax, trust your faculties, and explore the workings of each puzzle—a well-designed machine is like an organism; its motions and reaction to stimuli (the addition of colored marbles) can be predicted if the machine is observed carefully.

On their way, marbles will be interrupted, accosted and attacked by a myriad of items placed in their path, including swinging mallets, cannons, teleporters and diverters, all of which may affect the path of the marble and even change the path itself.

You may put as many marbles into the puzzle as you desire—but if too many are in the puzzle at the same time (usually about 8, depending on the puzzle), a warning light will be activated. When the light goes on, slow down and give a few marbles a chance to find their way out of the puzzle. If you do not heed the warning light, all marbles within the puzzle will be destroyed.

IF YOU NEED MORE GUIDANCE

If you run into difficulties, you may at any time access the online Help system by simply pressing F1, or pulling down the Help menu. The Help Files are detailed and extremely useful, and provide descriptions of many of the mysterious components adorning the puzzles.

STRATEGY AND TIPS

Here are some pointers that will enable you to achieve higher scores and use fewer marbles:

1. **PATIENCE**—Take your time. Be patient! Watch where the marbles are going and which tracks are open to new marbles. This will help determine which marbles to select to drop into which funnel.
2. **FOLLOW THE PATH** — Take some time to map out the route the marble will take before dropping it in start funnel. Envision exactly where the marble will go when it is dropped by tracing the track all the way to exit bin. This is a time-consuming process, but it will pay off in higher scores and fewer wasted marbles. You have only so many marbles to lose, after all.
3. **PUZZLE SPEED** — You may adjust the speed of the puzzle by manipulating the speedometer at the bottom right of the screen, or by simply pressing + or -.



4. **PURCHASING MARBLES** — When starting a new game, you are given seven of each colored marble. As you progress to the more difficult puzzles, you may find it necessary to buy additional marbles.

To purchase marbles, click on the Purchase Marble Button, designated by a “+” symbol located next to the reservoir whose color you would like to purchase. The color of the “+” will match the color of marbles in the reservoir. You will be “charged” (points deducted from your score) for each marble you purchase.

5. **STEEL MARBLES** — Even among marbles there are those who seem to fill no purpose but to act as cannon fodder. If you find you must sacrifice a marble to trip a switch, change a diverter, be destroyed or be caught in an infinite loop, consider purchasing a Steel Marble.

Marble Drop

Steel marbles cost 100 points. It is a far better thing to lose a steel marble than to risk destroying a colored marble, which carries a price of 500 points, or even a black marble, which will curl your hair at a market price of 1500 points. Note that steel marbles cannot be painted—they will pass right through a painter and retain their steel color.

6. **TIMING** — Sometimes a puzzle cannot be solved without losing marbles unless you time the release of the marble just so. Dropping a second marble into the puzzle while the first is still going through may be the only way to complete the puzzle with minimum losses and maximum points.
7. **BLACK MARBLES** — The black marble is a transforming marble, which takes on, chameleon-like, the color of the marble needed to solve the puzzle. The black marble is expensive (1500 points) and should only be used as a last resort. If for some reason you can't figure out a puzzle and are losing too many marbles, purchase a few "chameleons" and drop them in. There is one glaring exception to the chameleon effect: **BLACK MARBLES CANNOT FILL THE STEEL MARBLE SLOT IN AN EXIT BIN.**
8. **BE EFFICIENT** — If the Puzzle only requires red, blue and yellow marbles, don't drop purple marbles into the puzzle — they will be destroyed and you will lose points.

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

These commands will be accomplished using your keyboard. Some of these have already been mentioned in this book, but they are indexed below for speedy reference:

- F1 — Access Help Menu
- F2 — New Game. This command brings the player to the first puzzle, after which the player may select a new puzzle if desired.
- F3 — Pause/Resume
- F4 — Toggle between full screen/window
- F11 — Save Game. You can save up to 10 separate games. Game names may have 30 characters or less.
- F12 — Load Game. This loads any previously saved game, picking up where you left off.
- + and - — Speed up and slow down the puzzle

ADDITIONAL SETUP HELP

The installation and startup procedure have been designed to be as trouble-free and user-friendly as possible. If you yet have any trouble setting up or starting MARBLE DROP, access the online help menu (F1), or take a look at the ReadMe file on the CD for late breaking information. If neither of these venues should yield the desired response, call or fax Maxis Customer Service/Technical Support. Before you call, we would appreciate it if you would take a few preliminary steps to ensure that we may help you as quickly and efficiently as possible.

1. If calling about a technical matter concerning the software, please be sitting in front of your computer and have your CD within easy reach. It will be easier to talk you through it that way.
2. Have as much information as possible about the problem(s) you are having. This includes a detailed description of the problem, the steps you had followed prior to the problem, any other software you may be running in the background, and any error messages you have received.
3. It also helps to have information about your computer set-up, including what kind of operating system you use, how much RAM you have, how much hard drive space you have to spare, and what types of sound and video cards you are running.

We will do our best to help you solve the problem, but please be patient.